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A Fourth Bouquet
of
English Sonnets

By
John Edward Magraw,

The Author of

THE TEMPLE WRITINGS, with new companions,
THE TALE OF THE OLD TEMPLE,
A POET'S PLEA FOR WORLD PEACE, etc.

TO THE MEMORY OF
SIR THOMAS LYNEDOCHE GRAHAM,
FORMERLY JUDGE PRESIDENT
OF THE SUPREME COURT,
GRAHAMSTOWN, SOUTH AFRICA.

*A "great Judge," and a very
great and gallant gentleman.*

ON HIS UNVARYINGLY, SOUL-SATISFYING,
BEAUTIFUL KOWIE.

Old Time it seems is keeping thee unknown
To multitudes of worldly-minded men,
That when the Goddess Reason we re-throne
Thy healing charms may make them sane again.

We are not wise to worship nought but speed,
For Earth has treasures that are lost through haste,
And let us free our minds from sordid greed
That subtle Nature's wealth we may not waste.

Dead centuries have long wrought to make thee fair,
And Time antique so worked with varying grace
The richest beauty is spread everywhere
Upon thy seldom-frowning, placid, face.

The morning glories o'er thy dappled ground,
The tints of sunrise on each little lake,
Are wedded to the sea's most witching sound
To cause our sordid spirits to awake,

But who can voice the rapture of the dark ?
When fled the diamonds from thy dazzling sea.
The startled, thoughtful, soul, amazed, will hark
To whispers dim of what has yet to be.

NOTE The urge to contribute again to the Red Cross Funds by writing more sonnets awakens the fear of a factitious element in them and, on this occasion that the blue-pencil fiends could find ignoble use for their improving pencils. And this natural fear is not lessened by the saddening awareness that the author is no longer young. Notwithstanding, he is agreeably conscious that many of the following compositions composed in Southport at odd moments from October to February, have had a similar propulsion to that which brought into being his old-time Sonnets. And this raises the hope that his impulsive carelessness (*a sonnet is a moment's moment* ") may yet again win from his critics, of whom, this time, he is a little afraid, the common admission of spontaneity. Moreover, it will be obvious that they are, largely, the resultant of 'emotion recollected in tranquillity', most of them are, obviously empirically based, e.g., apropos the sonnet on the snake at Mount Liere the colour-loved, heaven communing glorified hills in their spiritualized unworldliness at the end of the South African World, as if they belonged to another and a much more celestial region, the wide spread, stationary gold of the sun-smitten veld below the spirit-finding, unending, quietness of the blue of the sky above, the fascinating sinuosities, the vermiculated convolutions, and the daedalian colour scheme of this awe inspiring snake, were very easily visualized. It would however, almost be preferable to be told by his doctor of the date of his death than to experience again the cachexy of mind and body caused by this unforgettable snake. Such a subject might be better treated as a short story. But still it is, as are many of the others, as claimed, the result of "emotion recollected in tranquillity"

"La critique est aisée et l'art est difficile"

"It is in the perfection and precision of the instantaneous line that the claim to immortality is laid"

He does not desire that his critics who will easily perceive that he does not admire any precision of burin, be unconscionable, but reminds them that "the task of the best criticism is to maintain the ecstasy of intellectual experience," and hopes that they will, in the circumstances, 'wreath the rod of criticism with roses.'

Readers of our local papers will remember the reviews, and the repeated mentions of his last unpretentious pamphlet. As the whole of the purchase price of this pamphlet is also being devoted to the Red Cross Funds he bespeaks a repetition of the noble endeavours of Mr. J. Leech and Mr. T. Meadows.

To conclude: he thanks all who have helped to make the sales so satisfactory. In especial he thanks the *highly esteemed and worthy publishers*, James Starr and Sons: the pamphlet was sold without profit and, at a very busy period, the handling must have been correspondingly troublesome. He is grateful.

" Beautiful words are the light of thought,

Clearness is the varnish of masters.

Qu'est-ce que la poésie?—' Eterniser
peut-être un rêve d'un instant.'

It is not absence of blemishes, but
presence of beauties that is important
in a volume of verse.

Un sonnet sans défaut vaut seul un long poème."



ON TWILIGHTS.

I

(To Lady Graham).

The gold of this October dying day
Outvies the tints of leaves of Autumn lush
That flicker in one long continued blush.
And when west stars their Maker's voice obey,
To take their station in the night array,
I shall be more perceptive of the hush
Than of their part in evening's starry gush,
For memory of the sunset passed away.

Long years ago, and near this echoing sea,
In days when things impersonal were as now,
Rich twilights were in open flower for me.
And gratitude awakens when I think
That Nature gracious does my mind endow
For twilights far apart the mystic link.

II

In tropic lands the twilight is a flower
That burgeons quick and comes to fullest bloom
Ere to the sunset-raptured spirits loom
The quietude of Nature's daily dower.
A single tint, ungifted with an hour,
Encircled by night's still enriching gloom
And colours making earth and heaven one room :
Two glories great deprive it of its power.

At times, too rare, upon our English skies,
Are colours that, although they vainly vie
With those that gem a lonely tropic sky,
Do yet subserve the twilight till it hies,
Which many times before we come to die
Wafts our rapt souls away to Paradise.

III

Created by our sun are countless nights
That merge in one at close of tropic day.
Where verdure fails to keep the sun at bay
Are countless little pearls of varying lights ;
Unknown green worlds, with unseen witching sights,
Whose orient flowers are stars when night's away,
But when night comes these flowers turn dark from grey :
One vast pale pearl sates beauty's appetites.

Most creatures have for day one selfish aim,
The highest oft for night one that is vile.
God seems to use the twilight to express
That night and day to Him are just the same,
And by this solemnizing spell beguile
Our minds to share His beauteous holiness.

AN UNFORGOTTEN HORSE.

Behind the moss-stained, age-long, crumbling wall
The water slept in mind-attracting dark,
And in calm summer days I could not mark
Ripple most faint on the funereal pall,
Except by barges of the slowest crawl,
Like spirits crossing Styx in Charon's bark,
Drawn by the one-paced horse which seemed to hark
A modern Charon's course-commanding call

For scores of years since then I've oceans seen ,
In different climes large seas, vast sleeping lakes,
But never water with so great a spell ,
In all my waking dreams it's ever been
And how that one-paced horse mind-magic makes
I lack the words the mystic charm to tell

INCIDENTS : 1883.

I

To ' class room ' sent for task—had I been dull—?
A day-dream must have ruled my childish mind,
For teachers, scholars all, leave me behind
The outer door with little hands I pull,
And if unlocked my efforts had been null
Diversions childish I self pitying find
With books and chalk, and with the window blind
Mill girls at nightfall seen how beautiful !

Coiled on the mat I slept the night away,
While my distracted mother far and wide
Sought me in vain in every likely place
Once near the school her anxious footsteps stray,
But for release I then no longer cried ,
My first fright was her maddened wild embrace

INCIDENTS 1941.

II

Cold winter's hand was feeling for the door ,
The autumn twilight dank was fading out ,
I was the only living one about,
And at my mother's grave I long did pore,
And dwell on sad or happy days of yore,
Until, forgetful of the day's dim rout,
Heedless of bell or sexton's warning shout,
Inside the gates I was immured once more

And then I thought I heard my mother's voice .
" Than be alive and clamber o'er the gate
'Tis better brought in clothed in burial dress ,
It is the dead that cause have to rejoice ,
The peace and joy the righteous living wait
No earthly language can God's gift express,"

A MEMORY OF FIFTY YEARS AGO.

(To Miss Braddon)

The stain on every page was eloquent,
The glue used for the fingered pages torn,
Or where the hand-soiled covers were outworn ;
The questions quick, if ' Vixen ' still was lent—
An ' Ishmael ' new for that which had been rent.
But all-devouring I was never lorn,
And read them all and felt as one new-born ;
No library lad, or devotee, more bent.

And minds in millions have been charmed by thee.
If in elysian lands thou canst but know
The joy in earthly life thou didst bestow,
How great thy post-earth happiness must be—
A western sunset rich, with orient glow—
A memory fragrant for eternity.

A MEMORY.

(To Nathaniel Hawthorn)

From Boston unto Salem once I went
To see the place he has immortalised,
Because his writings are so highly prized—
Writings that waked my youthful wonderment.
Rich visions undeserved to me were sent ;
The ' undeserved ' philosopher ne'er surmised ;
But gratitude, so rarely rhapsodised,
In me was born as proved by my intent.
His rooms were sacrosanct ; this spoiled my plan,
' Too many devotees ' had caused the ban.
A purchase got me in the shop that day,
Shop famous made by house of gables seven.
In it and in the house I long did stay,
And once again I found myself in heaven.

OUR SOUTH AFRICAN FRIENDSHIP.

(To the " D.L.W." with thanks for old M.S.)

Beginning 'neath a sky of fleckless blue,
And on a sea whose waters were as still
As mountain lakes which image clear each hill
With all its verdure and its every hue ;
Upon a stately ship pulsating through
An ocean that a sunset was to fill
With colours that our very souls did thrill
E'en while we danced as daylight died to view.

Will not our friendship last when life is o'er,
And in some fair elysian land we live
With memories rich remembered worlds can give ?
Shall we not meet on some unearthly shore
Where mystic joys of God unfugitive
Will so enthrall we ask of Him no more ?

27/5/26. ?

FOR AND ABOUT J. H.

I

In early teens, both working in one place,
We passed each other daily with a stir
Of heart our cheeks did register
With flush of youthful blood upon each face.
My eyes though dazzled yet could dimly trace
The new emotion that was waked in her.
By most strange signs forced was I to infer
She knew mine was, as hers, a piteous case.
Month after month such flushings but no word,
Except when speech our work on us compelled,
And then there was a tremor in each voice.
In giving aught all of our bodies stirred.
Dame Nature made for us unpitying choice
That in love's trembling grip we should be held.

II

I had to go away across the sea,
And with a heart as heavy and as chill
As were the iron pillars on the hill
I laid in wait, and slowly left when she
Appeared below and slowly walked towards me.
And once again the agonizing thrill ;
On both our cheeks did Venus colour spill.
No stop ! two names breathed low in agony.
She on the iron pillars soon did lean.
And each at each long looked we in despair.
Our hearts contained all of creation's pain.
On life's large stage was never sadder scene.
What happened to the intervening air ?
Death knows my girl-wife I ne'er saw again.

ON AN OLD ANTHOLOGY.

(To John Ruskin. I do not wonder at what men
suffer but I often wonder at what they lose).

A quarter of a shilling I let go
To take into my very happy hands
This treasure that in many foreign lands
Has given joys book-lovers only know.
'Twas to the seller, as his speech did show,
Of little value, and had no demands.
He might have flung these mind-flowers in his brands,
But Fate on me their fragrance did bestow.
The book has charmed me for some forty years,
Nor is there any decrease in its powers.
Oft have wise men been almost moved to tears
That God's great gifts should unregarded lie
As do the wonders of the daily sky
In this divine but man-marred world of ours,

NOSTALGIA.

A joyful wonder did my soul embrace,
About the dock I walked in youthful glee.
I was to go away across the sea,
More than 'a hundred miles,' no further place
I felt was known by all the human race.
And then a sad-faced woman looked at me,
"I wish that I was going too" said she;
The tone the smile took from my boyish face.
In every part of our great Empire wide
Are home-sick souls who never cease to yearn,
And shed at twilight time some silent tears,
To go back to the dear old country-side.
And until death their thoughts will ever turn
To hallowed spots they knew in youthful years.

A FIRST LONG VOYAGE.

Far from the land, to tropic waters near;
A feeling in my changed and boyish mind,
How little brought, how much was left behind;
The warming days, and warmer, and a fear
Their languid nights would never disappear;
The changed conditions with a spell to bind
My soul to mystic musings of a kind
That wants creation's cause to be quite clear.
With India near the tropic spirit came
And was diffused across the startled sky;
Describeless colours all the west did flame;
The tinted ocean made me feel forlorn;
Emotions new created through the eye—
A feeling that I then was being born.

A MEMORY OF A GARDEN IN INDIA.

(To OSWALD S.)

"What does the name 'Dilkusha' mean to me?"
A tree-made dark unending and sublime,
Created ere the concept men call 'Time';
Where light of sun was never known to be
That ringed it round in daily majesty.
Before all man-made laws creating crime,
Vast ages ere a poet formed a rhyme,
This thoughtful dark reposed in mystery.
But beings dark that mortals now call men,
In language now unused, or out of mind,
To unclothed maidens dark could then
Convey the 'thought' their faces black were fair:
And when in love these lovers were entwined
They neither knew nor cared for aught more rare.

A REMEMBERED SUNSET IN LUCKNOW.

A stranger could not tell which was the west
The zodiac was without one common hue
Rich heavenly colours only were in view
The north was vivid, and the south was blest
As is the east when Phoebus comes cloud-dressed
From nadir low to Zenith high tints did imbue,
And for a space our dear old world was new
Since earth had sunsets surely this was best

Beauty-created silence reigned as queen
Alternate to the earth and to the sky
Was turned each human, sunset-marvelling, eye
And pious minds thought God to judge had come
If greater glory at that day is seen
We shall be awestruck, and we shall be dumb

SWITZERLAND 1906 KEATS ENTHUSIASTS.

(To J L, an old friend and a kindred literary spirit)

A peach complexion, snow-white silvery hair,
Across the room he walked within the view
Of cosmopolitans of various hue
One rather felt than saw the diners stare
At this old man, serene and debonair
Mine was the table for this arrival new,
And mine the distich that the ice broke through
To cause his soul poetic to be bare

Some hours elapsed after we ceased to dine
In which the cream of beauteous English speech
Followed an earthly feast with one divine
How blest is he who such a spirit meets !
Remembering blessings that on me he did beseech
I pray he's met and conversed with John Keats

A NIGHT SPENT ON A SOUTH AFRICAN MOUNTAIN.

(To H W, to revive the memory of F T N, Mayville)

A mountain high twixt my objective lay
My youth the ascent much less arduous made,
And need was none to walk by cooling shade,
It was the red close of a summer day
With rests but few though long I made my way
The summit reached, it was by night arrayed
I groped about and soon my rugs were laid,
In hon's lair disused all night to stay

Awake ! the quiet, beauty took for bride,
And Phoebus magic made with cloudy skies,
The sister mountain tops had orient dyes.
Of million dawns that here were born and died,
That to eternity did subtly glide,
Was this alone one seen by human eyes ?

AN INVOCATION TO ASTREA.

No longer stay from earth, where unjust men,
Whose power for good yet waits upon their will,
Thine eyes divine with tears celestial fill
Come through the empyrean once again,
The Zodiac leave, but to our ken
Come not as giving life, but as to kill
The tyrants who earth's evil practise still
And make our world a pestilential den

But sometimes soa1, and when the thoughtless ask
Why thou dost veil thy ultra-dazzling eyes,
And hover midway 'neath the watching skies,
Then say, " Injustice forces me to mask
Have one mind good, I'll help you with this task—
To make your man-made Hell a paradise "

A NOVEMBER RED ROSE.

(To DORIS PRICE)

A perfumed beauty 'neath the full-faced moon
A warmth-suggester ere this wintry day
Had coldly died in robes of ashen grey.
Amid the opulence of flaming June
It had not seemed to be a floral boon,
But in the gaudy summer subtly lay
A germ to give this season one charm gay,
As in dark midnight lies the germ of noon.

No winter has the poets loving mind.
And always in that land are fragrant flowers.
There are no seasons sombre filled with gloom,
It has its own sweet sunshine and its showers.
Red roses devotees unceasing find,
A Flora tends each never fading bloom.

UNREALISED HEAVENS.

(To R and J.).

I do not ask the pair to let me pass,
But step aside and mark the maiden's face
Whose soul within her eyes has taken place,
While he stands mute upon the unseen grass.
A glance upon his soul-surrendered lass,
Then one aslant, embarrassed by her grace—
Her modesty of love would show less trace,
Yet 'tis revealed in all its trembling mass.

The winter trees are with green leaves arrayed.
The withered grass is hid by fragrant flowers.
Sun, moon, and stars have crowded in the skies.
The dank, dark, day has air of perfumes made,
Time now stands still with all his wingless hours:
Here are two souls, ere death, in paradise.

ON WIGAN PARK IN WINTER.

(To Arthur J Hawkes, Esq, with thanks for the stimuli to sonnet production and to noble efforts to aid Red Cross funds)

Not of refulgent summer though it bring
The choicest charms of our maturing sun ,
Nor of the season where its blessings run
Of luscious fruits to which Heaven's colours chng ,
Nor of the sweet and earth-awakening Spring ,
For when these seasons three with time are done
A not inferior glory has begun
Of winter bleak and bare I gladly sing.
The leafless branches etched on sombre skies ,
A myriad patterns made by myriad winds ,
Rich flowerless charms seen by poetic minds
The warmest thrill comes with the coldest boon—
When breezeless, starless, thoughtful, darkness flies
And Wigan Park is " wondering at the moon "

INSATIATED.

Rich tropic dawns and sunsets that depress,
The verdure of vast jungles, forests, dells,
Describeless flowers neath skies where magic dwells,
White fleecy clouds on sapphire limitless,
Fresh water stilled that mirrors days' progress,
The coloured calm a lurid storm foretells,
Weird sights and sounds with all their witching spells,
Decades of years of tropic loveliness

In lands untropic spacious pictured rooms,
The choicest works of art to banish glooms,
Excited children's ultra-ghttering eyes
Is it a sad, is it a happy fate,
That though this beauty should imparadise
The spirit still remains insatiate ?

ON A VALUED, VALUELESS, PICTURE.

To Margaret Hopkinson (with thanks for putting a picture in my room)

Blue-tinted sea near sea-companioned grass,
A little guarding rock where sea meets land,
A waiting boat upon the hardening sand,
And watching for her lover one lone lass.
A homely picture easy to surpass,
Yet with such grace that one may understand,
E'en though of technique there is no command ,
Sold with disdain, and bought " just for the glass."
Of sonnets as of pictures 'tis the same,
Though poetry is for us God's greatest dower ,
Dead to its charms our country still remains
And but for thee, because it bears thy name,
This sonnet is as is a faded flower ,
Less value than the paper it contains.

TO THE RT. HON. DAVID LLOYD GEORGE.

AN APPEAL.

In times of peace the common consciousness
Is unconcerned with mighty men of old,
World-shaping deeds are as a tale untold ;
And in the whirl of war's unholy stress
Great men inactive live in memory less
Than obscure heroes who exclusive hold
Rich patriot minds with deeds of daring bold :
Such fate is thine till time brings thee redress.

With such a life, with such experience blessed,
Who is more fit to give rich stimuli,
To keep us great, to make us greater still—
To turn our thoughts to what is wise and high,
That good may flourish, evil be repressed ?—
We shall be greater if we do God's will.

SOUTH AFRICAN OCEANIC SILENCES.

From dawn to dusk, from dusk to dawn, no sound
Day after day, unless an unfelt wind
That they exist sweet peace and calm may find,
And silence deep o'er dappled sun-baked ground
May know no other ruler has been found :
Rare and fierce storms serve but to bind
This trinity, unloved by human kind,
In fellowship for lonely leagues around.

Of countless man-thought desolations where
Nought animate comes nigh, there are a few
Whose mystic beauty caused me to transgress :
The cloistral calms, the stilled cerulean air,
Lights, shadows, shapes with tints of every hue—
Had I for these repulsive humanness ?

ON PRETTY JEANNE, THE PRESIDING SPIRIT OF A PARISIAN BODEGA.

How great was her surprise when French words rare
Used by French masters that to her were strange
I used in our discourse ; out of her range
Was much I learned that English dress did wear.
The words and thoughts appeared to her most fair.
But my poor spoken French her face made change,
With smiles amuse, with laughter oft derange,
To hear such speech with such an English air.

I asked her once five English words to speak,
And these were they : " Mary had a little lamb."
At her attempt I clutched the counter jamb,
Wine-warmed French folk went wild in their delight,
Convulsive laughter tears rolled down each cheek :
No one more gay than this Parisian sprite.

**A PLEA TO HUMANS FOR KINDNESS TO ALL
DUMB ANIMALS, AND LOVE TO DOGS,
HORSES, AND CATS.**

(TO : E.A.H.)

Not since God's mandate that our earth should be
Was any life created that could choose
Its form or nature, nor could it refuse
The gifts or limits of God's great decree.
For man or beast no pride in pedigree,
Though unlike beast man may have more to lose
If greater gifts of God he fails to use
To strive all forms of life from pain to free.
Note noble traits of common mongrel dogs,
Amusing cats, quaint, sleek, domestic fays,
The love-deserving, useful, horse, big-eyed.
Death quick and fearless for food-giving hogs !
Kindness to all that lives in life's dark maze !
A duty this for all for whom Christ died.

**ON TWO YOUNG GERMAN STUDENTS WHO, IN
BERLIN, ERE THE GREAT WAR, PRESENTED
TO ME A COPY OF—THOMAS A KEMPIS!
"AS SIGN OF FRIENDSHIP."**

Of Shakespeare and of Milton you had learned.
One fierce desire extruded from each mind
All but the one that you the key might find
To ope the casket which their gems inurned.
Not I for perfect English more had burned,
The more I talked and quoted more you pined
To know how English words should be combined :
Your gift expressed the gratitude I earned.
Had your barbarian rulers been as wise,
Your nation would not now be in world-scorn,
And justly loathed by nations proudly free.
Our poets do our greatness symbolize.
With worshippers of God not war we'er born,
And may live lives as God would have them be.

ON A LITTLE INLAND SOUTH AFRICAN TOWN.

(TO : W.P.).

On guard stand little hills that please the eye
Mid greenery changing with the changing sun—
A lover staunch whose wooing's never done,
And trees as sentinels are perched on high :
Into this sun-loved town they seem to pry
To learn how its affairs are being run.
Whate'er they see 'tis quiet as a nun
In prayer to God for thoughts that went awry.
All seasons are sun-steeped ; hot summer skies
The silent streets with dreamy shadows fill ;
Some shifting shadows seeking shadows still.
When slumbrous burning day in languor hies
There is in sunset hues' eestatic thrill
A prelibation of God's paradise.

AN EVENING WALK.

(To : M.M.).

I walked one eve upon the Cawnpore road,
A tropic silence wrapped the speaking scene.
The Indian sun was touchingly serene.
And while the sky with radiant colours glowed
Some white-clad forms dressed in the Indian mode
Did kneel and downwards bend with solemn mien,
As if one mind alone in them had been ;
And towards the sun their worship was bestowed.
A God-abandoned feeling my young mind
Obsessed unto a sense of banishment
From all that earth of heaven can adumbrate.
No longer young, with searching long I find,
Than doubt that God a Saviour us has sent,
That heliolatry's a happier fate.

AN EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE.

(To : Mr. W. E. Hopkinson).

What would an eyesore unto many be
Has by thy gifted, plastic, hands been made
A work worth more than thrice the sum I paid.
With beauty for my eyes each day to see,—
And beauty ever fills my heart with glee—
An object useful on my board arrayed
Near other beauties that around are laid,
It silent speaks the skill God gave to thee.
Alas ! so many other plastic hands
Were moved by German war-determined will
To service under hellish Mars commands.
Objects of beauty now are out of mind,
And call is none for our artistic skill,
To means of death devote poor humankind.

TWILIGHT.

What is the nature of the twilight grey ?
When day is done and sun's celestial light
No longer gilds the objects of our sight ,
When all the glory seems to go away
Nature o'er human hearts has greater sway.
With all life waiting for the coming night,
With all that's subject to our Maker's might,
Our calm minds seem to fuse at close of day.
Who has not felt this pantheistic spell,
This solemnizing of the quiet mind ?
While vivid colours clothe the western skies
Ours seems a land where happy spirits dwell,
A place where we without our searching find
A vestibule unto a paradise.

ON SUMMERS THAT I SHALL NOT SEE.

I

Few English summers now has life for me ·
Red roses rare in gardens quaint and old ;
The sun-responsive, sun-loved, marigold ;
The buttereups and daisies that with glee
In meadows verdurous beauty-lovers see ;
White water lillies—dreams of waters cold,
Still and withdrawn—that nymphs with awe behold,
Sights, sounds, and smells, divine, no more to be.

Yet summers new will not the old outvie,
Those seen long after I had first been born—
Those that my mind with mystic skill adorn—
Death would his terror lose and I could die
Without the hope of an eternal morn
If left my mind and summers dead descri.

II

Rivers now in the ocean then will run
By English fields of soft delicious grass,
And down their banks self-centred lovers pass.
Perfumes will blend beneath the ripening sun.
Spring will rejoice her sister's reign's begun.
Hot summer hours will woo wild Boreas
Till cooling shades turn into one wide mass,
When all the languid-making day is done.

The glamour of the twilight will be felt
By all who at Castalian fount have drank,
Sweet Sabbath bells will chime a call to God,
To kneel at altars where their parents knelt.
I in the fearful grave will then have sank
An unregarding unregarded clod.

WATERFORD, 1894.

The smokeless Sabbaths of my native town
Gave but faint hope to see a sapphire sky.
And on week-days none thought to look on high.
For coal and cotton goods we won renown.
One will alone from sunrise to sundown—
With dreary work a dreary life to buy.
And when outworn old folks had come to die
Few creature comforts had been their life's crown.

With boyish mind asleep—the harbour fair !
The fishers lone ! the sounding sea ! the Irish green !
The smokeless, spotless, wide, unsullied skies !
The vitalising, wine-drenched, Irish air !
The shining stones on beds of streams serene !
Rich Irish beauty seen with English eyes ! !

TABLE MOUNTAIN.

That wise aspirer to rich colouring skies
I had regarded from most points of view,
The last not best although from one quite new,
(Not all that daedal human minds devise
Has beauty for the poet's wondering eyes).
The cable railway gives each varying hue,
And warm caressing airs our car imbue,
But near the plain is where the grandeur lies.
The summit reached, no rest is for the mind,
And then the sky draws less than dappled earth.
But oh ! what rapture there to sit and dream
Of æons e'er the earliest man had birth,
Of loveliness unknown by humankind,
Seen but by Him we worship as supreme.

ON THE CANGO CAVES, OUDTSHORN.

Prepared by hearsay for a magic spell
I yet was thrilled by ageless stalactites
And their bizarre coeval stalagmites.
Of shapes fantastic words are none to tell,
Nor of the beauty in these caves that dwell,
No better use for artificial lights
Than bring such beauties from eternal nights :
Discovery rarer none for man befell.
And after miles of wandering in these caves,
Where silence deep has sempiternal been,
The need for freer air draws me away,
As sombre feelings from our loved ones' graves,
When I emerge and common sights are seen
How shabby seems the golden sunny day !

A SNAKE INCIDENT AT MOUNT FRERE, SOUTH AFRICA.

To winter sunshine warm its way was found
And, basking on hot veld in bright midday,
My thoughtless steps caused it to move away.
Ne'er had I made a more resultful sound ;
My mind no longer to day dreams was bound,
Fear, awe, and wonder, were in the array
Of mixed emotions that my soul did sway :
I know what's meant by "rooted to the ground."

The beauty had for several minutes passed,
When backward moving by no act of will
I found that I was conscious of my breath.
I was not ill ; I was not well ; aghast
At my perceptive powers of voided ill
And percept that I had been near to death.

ON VICTORIA FALLS.

When sixteen miles away you hear the call
To worship beauty 'neath rich sapphire skies
That hover o'er an all-day-long sunrise
Formed by the upflung spray of this great fall
Of water which when nearer doth appal,
A thousand yards of spray ! the parent lies
Deep down beneath the verge's sun-made dyes :
Froth-churned wild waters lace the hidden wall.

Along the facing bank, nore than a mile,
Are glimpses few of great Zambesi's tide ;
The gorge a Hell with waters in distress,
And madly flung against each screaming side.
But spray-drenched ground e'en there our minds beguile
With rainbows small of fairy loveliness.

ON A LONELY LITTLE CHURCH IN INDIA, 1898.

(In memory of W.D.F. and his angelic wife).

Sweet Sabbath eves with memory-haunting calm ;
The bell tree-buried with its English call ;
The darkening path where evening shadows fall ;
And then for troubled souls God-given balm ;
Time-tested hymns and an eternal psalm ;
The preacher's words the evil to appal ;
His gracious benediction for us all—
I seem to see great God give him the palm.

Out of the Church and England was away ;
Bright Indian stars were crowded in the skies,
If all the glamour that is raised in me,
Whene'er I think of India's Sabbath day,
Could be expressed that all should realize,
How beautiful this sonnet then would be !

A WISH.

(To DORIS PRICE)

Born in November ! truant, sun-loved, day
That stayed behind from rich, rose-perfumed, June ;
And so thine infant eyes from some hot dune
First saw thy favourite colour far away,
The blue that still thy rapt affections sway.
Does joy in colour thee from sin immune,
And thy artistic soul to good attune,
That dark December is to thee as May ?

What worship was it gave thy mind the ply
For Christ-like deeds to others in distress,
And for all sorrow thus to sympathize ?
When by God's will thy time has come to die
May thy soul be disposed to holiness,
Nor late thy first day in God's paradise.

A DIVINE DAY IN ITALY.

Brought through the dark to sleep the night away ;
What rapture when my curtains were withdrawn
To see the tranquil lake beyond the lawn,
And young, fresh, beauty of the new born day
The skies rare colours on the water lay,
And glamour steeped this lovely, foreign, dawn
Alas ! that unused beauty cannot be in pawn
For beauty-worship when and how we may
Would in the amber of immortal phrase
I could embalm that stationary time,
Ever in perfumed memory to remain
The sights, the smells, till starry night sublime.
Heaven must have lost one of its summer days.
Oh, dainty day, come back to earth again !

A FOREIGN CATHEDRAL.

My poet friend was right, ' It has a spell.'
Old centuries crowd around its very door,
And millions dead have trod its foot worn floor
Time with its storms and sunshine tell
The tale on which the mystic-minded dwell,
Of man's attempt life's meaning to explore,
His fear that sin has lost it evermore,
His hope through Christ that all will yet be well
The pious faces as they pass within
Have looks as borrowed from those centuries gone,
As though time-ended spirits free from sin
In bodies new found earth a temple yet,
And when the sacred music starts anon
You feel the living and the dead are met

A DANTEAN SUGGESTED SONNET.

(In Shakespearian Technique)

When this sweet maid walks in the village street
Her youthful sweetness, purity, and grace,
Evoke from all whom she may chance to greet
Words with a tremor as they see her face,
Were they to speak or write some words in praise
It would not change her soul's celestial calm
She still would have the rapt angelic gaze
Of saints in heaven that sing a holy psalm.

While she is passing on her maiden way
In those who look awakes a sense of love—
How sweet this sense the gazers cannot say—
A feeling lifting souls earth's sins above,
All heavenly graces do in her combine ;
The hand that made her surely is divine.

SUGGESTED BY A PORTUGUESE SONNET.

(To : " Darling Marjorie W ").

The sickly, sunless, day fulfils its threat ;
Nor moon nor stars shine in the fearful sky ;
With chilly rains the trees are dripping wet ;
An icy, sea-crossed, wind comes shrilling by.
The darkening earth makes quiet with its gloom,
So that wild waves afar with awesome moan
Suggest that sailors have met dreadful doom,
And cling to spars storm-tossed, expiring and alone.

Ghost-looking faces pass me in the street,
I see no smile, nor hear no cheerful laugh.
Folks huddle by as if dark death to meet—
As if composing some sad epitaph.
I ope my door : smiles lustre lend to light :
" Marjorie " ! Dear God ! how beautiful this night !

SUGGESTED BY A FRENCH SONNET.

In all creation is there gold more fair,
Than in the tresses of my lady lies ?
And in the whole siderial regions, where
As bright a lustre as her sparkling eyes ?
What pomègranite coral ever had
That vied with her red, kiss-inviting, lips ?
What luscious peach with hues was ever clad
That her resplendent cheeks could not eclipse ?
The shapely carving of her snow-shamed breast
Praxiteles could never hope to match,
Howe'er he strove the mastery to wrest,
From her great artists inspiration catch,
Oh happy colours, sounds, and shapes, divine,
The faint, dim, semblance of this maid of mine.

SUNSET WORSHIP, NEAR CALA, SOUTH AFRICA.

" Reverie is the Sunday of thought."
A silence deep as of the central earth.
Rich-tinted land unto the dazzling west.
Alone ! did Nature use me to attest—
In that vast veld of wide embracing girth,
With space to house world's people without dearth—
That beauty-loving minds by her be blessed
Is not her aim ; a prodigal, her best
To lonely lands, rich gems of priceless worth.
Abrupt my reverie ends, two jet-black eyes
Have found a sunset on my raptured face.
A little, naked, wondering, Kafir lad
Stands open mouthed in most perplexed surprise :
" What can it be ? no food or drink I trace ;
He is a white man, and he must be mad."

AN INDIAN MEMORY.

A lonely place in India's mystic land
Where white-skinned beings were unknown to be,
A little Indian world whose mystery
Leads me to give my horse a harsh command :
Far from his home he yet obeys my hand,
And canters with reluctance felt by me
O'ercome by glamour, wishing all to see.
In silence, I dismount ; in reverie, stand.

And as I gaze upon an ancient well,
Midst trees suggesting centuries long time dead,
An Indian maid comes with soft-sandalled tread
Out of the cloistral calm to open space.
Her pitcher drops ! away as if from Hell !
In terror at my wondering English face.

10/3/42.

NEAR CASHMERE.

Was there a bottom to that valley vast,
That could contain the cities of the earth ?
What fauna moved upon its lower girth ?
What flora for non-humans had been massed ?
How many sightless centuries there had passed ?
Far far away where angels may have birth
Were heaven-pierced mountains of celestial worth.
I stood transfixed, with terror was aghast.

I trembled back to a pergola green,
Some miles of lovely, sunny, dappled ground ;
A million sun-made diamonds could be seen.
The silence ? deep ! I made a little sound.
A piece of truant Heaven on earth serene,
With Indian leafy labyrinths around.

14/3/42.

GRATITUDE.

Oh Thou who makest and who knowest all,
Have I not had of sorrow my full share ?
How many disappointments to despair ?
How oft on noblest quests has been a fall,
When need I thought was none on Thee to call ?
Yet still I strive for what Thou must deem fair,
And though withheld from what on earth's most rare
That now my years are few does not appal.

For I have tried some summits to attain,
My failures are with Thee a great success,
And in Thy praise I offer grateful breath.
Great good with age is found in all past pain ;
But for no gift is greater cause to bless
Than that my faith in Thee will last till death.

16/3/42.

To my only Son, Herbert Isdell Magraw, now
serving his country in defence of freedom, justice,
and liberty ; and to his anxious, loved, and loving,
wife, " Kay."

Not thine a nature that would humans kill,
Nor any lowly creature that has life ;
A spirit gentle whom all forms of strife
With sorrow disproportionately fill.
For loveliness a quick surrendered will.
Rich homely beauties could not be too rife
With which to shrine thy anxious, waiting, wife :
How sad in thee war's purpose to instill.

In thy life's book was reached the jeweled page
Ere exiled by the vile death-loving Mars,
The God the Germans worship as supreme.
May thoughts of friends thy loneliness assuage,
And prayers for thee beneath the foreign stars
Make life's book golden yet more golden seem.

By the same Author:—

Pretoria to Pretoria. Summer to Summer,
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Seven Temple sonnets, four Temple verses, etc.,
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Some favourite verses, some fresh verses,
The Tale of the old Temple,
My children,
A little bouquet of English Sonnets.
Another little bouquet of English Sonnets.
Still another bouquet of English Sonnets.

AND

MY SOUTH AFRICA

(just published)

(Before the Great War the Author, after visiting Germany, found frequent expression of his fear of this Nation of war-worshippers; in 1924 he publicly suggested that 'General Smuts' should widen the scope of his influence; in 1935 he publicly invited the great Statesman to "abandon Africa and save Europe"; after the Munich crisis he asked him for a message to the world: this message was privately printed and sent to all those who could keep the peace or make war. Much of this pamphlet is in this book, but it deals chiefly with the reactions of the author to the 'beauty of South Africa.'

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